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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces a form of movement-therapy known as Eurythmy, an art of movement that expresses visibly the sounds of speech and the tones and intervals of music. Created by Rudolf Steiner in 1912, Eurythmy differs from other arts in its therapeutic value, educational applications, and the physiopsychological theory upon which it is based. Steiner's psychophysical concept of the human being delineates integral relationships among four bodies: the physical body, the growth or etheric body, the soul-personality or astral body, and the ego. Of these, the etheric is most relevant to speech and Eurythmy. All essential activities of humans draw their energy from the etheric body. Speech sounds are the product of etheric forces, and the air formations created by the spoken words are an image of the etheric forces that created them. Eurythmy is a method of controlled gross motor movement to stimulate the etheric forces. Formative laws underlying speech and music are carried over into the larger expressive movements of the arms and body. Each Eurythmy movement has a different therapeutic effect. The Eurythmy curriculum in the Steiner Schools (or Waldorf Schools) is adjusted to developmental stages with different exercises for each age level. (Author/RH)

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EURYTHMY: A MOTORIC AND ARTISTIC METHOD OF TEACHING YOUNG CHILDREN

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When educators speak of innovations or new approaches, they generally mean those ideas that are compatible to their own experiences and sometimes to their pet theories. It is unfair to select out educators as being the only traditionalists; it applies to every profession. For example, the ancient Chinese art of medicine-known as acupuncture is not being readily accepted by the A.M.A. and American physicians, although it is practiced widely in China, Russia, and France, and to some extent in Germany and England. This is not a criticism, but a fact of life that it is difficult to change people's ways of thinking and doing things. I have prefaced this paper with the above statements because what I will attempt to introduce here will be variant with traditional and contemporary theories and practices in education.

What I will introduce is a form of movement-therapy, known as Eurythmy, which is not to be confused with Dalcroze's "Eurythmics," a form of dance to melody.

Eurythmy, which is an art of movement that expresses and makes visible the sounds of speech and tones and intervals of music," was created and inaugurated in Switzerland by Rudolf Steiner in 1912" (Pouderoyen, 1970,p.7).

Steiner, (1861-1925), an Austrian philosopher and educator, was a controversial and well known figure in German-speaking countries during the early decades of this century. He lectured widely on his philosophy "anthroposophy," out of which sprang schools for normal and handicapped children, pharmaceutical companies, hospitals, clinics biodynamic farms, research centers and other enterprises. He gave new impulses in such fields as physics, medicine, economics, psychology, sculpture, drama, music therapy and Eurythmy, described by him as visible speech and visible song (Allan, 1959). It was out of his rather unusual insight into human nature and at the request of persons seeking advise regarding new forms of artistic movement that he created and developed the art of Eurythmy. Eurythmy, as an art form, is performed by groups or individuals and is used as a form of therapy. There are three types of Eurythmy-speech, tone, and curative or therapeutic. Speech Eurythmy is, of course, associated with speech sounds, and tone Eurythmy with music. Both are utilized in the performing arts on the stage, as teaching media and as therapeutic exercises. Curative Eurythmy is based on the gestures of artistic Eurythmy (speech and tone), except the movements are emphasized more dynamically.

Eurythmy differences from other arts of movement such as ballet, modern dance and mime, which are confined generally to music or gesture interpretation. Instead Eurythmy is a

disciplined art of movement of the arms and the body that visibly expresses the vowels and consonants of speech and the tones and intervals of the melody of music (Donath, 1937). Eurythmy is not meant to be pantomime or mimic, not illustrative, not interpretive gesture, but the visible equivalent movement of the musical phrase or the spoken word. The Eurythmic gesture in speech emulates the definite forms we produce in the air when we speak a word. Steiner explains that "the structure of language as such and the character of the separate sounds are brought to visible form in Eurythmy. The air-gesture which may be said to be present in language are imitated and made externally visible" (Steiner 1955, p. 15).

Steiner (1971b), explains the process and how he arrived at the Eurythmic gestures.

> It is not concerned with pantomimic gestures or dance movements, but with actual visible speech or visible song. When speaking and singing, the stream of air is formed in a certain way by the human organs of speech. If we study the formation of tone, vowels, consonants, sentence structure, syllabification, etc, we can form definite mental images of the corresponding manifestations of speech and song (p. 10).

Steiner adapted, transformed and extended these speech formations (images) made by the speech organs to movements

of the whole body, particular to the arms and hands. One could say the Eurythmic movements are based on the creative and formational power of speech. Each vowel and consonant of speech and each tone and interval of music has its own natural extension and visible expression of it through gesturing.

It is held that the sound bot.. of speech and music has in it an incipient formative power which can be captured and expressed by the gestures and movements especially of hands and arms. For it is with the hands and arms that man naturally expresses both his feelings and his meaning; and indeed in most parts of the world gesture is a natural accompaniment to speech.

However it requires a great deal of study (four years in fact, to become an Eurythmist), and an instinctive sense of language to discover these gestures and to understand their meanings as Steiner did. Nevertheless a natural sense for them can be developed by doing Eurthmy. For example in poetry the quality of a vowel is quite different than that of a consonant; among the vowels the "u" produces one effect; "a" produces another; among the consonants the soft and abrupt sound "B" has one quality; the hard and cutting "K" has another quality, and the lively and gentle "L" still another. These different qualities require different Eurythmic gestures to express them. Similarly in music, there is an obvious and distinct difference in quality between the completeness and finality of the interval of a fourth and the disquieting experience of the seventh. These intervals also call for different Eurythmic gestures.

According to Steiner (1955), "one must first experience the formation and structure of the sounds of a poem (and music) and only later bring it to Eurythmic expressive (through) movement, feeling (and) character" (p.20). (Further description and application of Eurythmy will be discussed more fully later in the article).

To understand what Eurythmy does for the human being one must go beyond the discussion and definition of Eurythmy. It was indicated that Eurythmy differs from other arts of movement in the sense that it is a highly disciplined art of movement integrally related to speech sounds and musical tones and intervals. Eurythmy is not only a performing art, but a therapeutic art as well. What substantially distinguishes Eurythmy from other artistic movement forms, is its therapeutic value and the physio-psychological theory upon which it is based. To understand Eurythmy it is essential that one understands the system of human development from which it was developed. The theory of human development described here is basically Steiner's idea. It is also the theory upon which the teaching methods in the Waldorf or Steiner schools are based.

Steiner's Theory of Human Development

Steiner's concept of human development is claimed to be based on his intuitive insight, direct perception and experience, not of intellectual theory, of the unfolding processes in the physical, emotional and intellectual development of man (Harwood, 1958). Steiner's (1965) psychophysical concept of man embodies the integral relationships of four bodies--the physical body, growth or "etheric" body, the soul-personality or "astral" body, and the "ego".

Only the physical body, of course, is visible to the physical senses and is easily understood. It is composed of minerals in various combination found in the physical world of matter. The growth, life "etheric" force body, as Steiner called it, forms an envelope (a body of forces) around the physical body which flows through it and influences the growth of the physical body. It is an invisible force, which the Russians have photographed and designated the bioplasmic force or body (Ostrander and Schroeder, 1971), that facilitates growth and maintains the life of the physical body. It follows definite laws of development. During the embryonic and early stages of childhood, the etheric forces concentrate on physical growth. During the process of maturation, these etheric forces are gradually released from the physical body to concentrate on the processes of emotional

and cognitive development (Ogletree, 1974b). Steiner (1965) explains the function of the etheric or life body:

> The life (etheric) body works in a formative way on the substances and forces of the physical body, thus bringing about the phenomena of growth, reproduction, and the inner movement of the saps. It is therefore the builder and moulder of the physical body, its inhabitant and architect. The physical body may even be spoken of as an image or expression of the life body (p.14).

Since Steiner's discovery of the etheric forces or body in the early 1900's his findings have been substantiated by the Chinese (Mann 1972), physicians, practicing acupuncture, and Russian (Ostrander and Schroeder, 1971), researchers, who have photographed these forces. Acupuncture, the art of the placement of needles in and the stimulation of the acupoints or energy points on the skin surface, is a method of correction of etheric flow imbalances in the body. The basis of health, says the acupuncture physician, is the proper flow of energy currents in the body. Good health is the free and unimpeded circulation of energy--the life forces--flowing from organ to organ along an invisible network of intercommunicating channels, which affects the flow of blood to the organs and tissues. Illness is then the blockage and imbalance of

the flow of these bioplasmic currents. The insertion of needles in one or more of the energy centers or acupoints on the skin revitalizes and facilitates the energy currents flow, putting the organism back in balance (Tiller, 1972).

The chinese maintain that the skin, liver, kidneys, etc, are only the temporal deposits for a number of energy current flows which move at various rates throughout the body. Each organ has its own regeneration or rate of cell replacement.

Russian scientists, who have photographed these forces by means of the Kirlian process seem to have confirmed that (Ostrander and Schroeder, 1971).

> The energy body did not merely seem to be a radiation of the physical body. The physical appeared somehow to mirror what was happening in the energy (p. 143).

Russian's also discovered that each organ of the body seems to have its own specific and individual etheric force body, which controls the regeneration rate of various organs. In 1923, Steiner (1923), spoke of this same phenomena:

> All the organs of the physical body are maintained in their form and configuation by the currents and movements of the etheric body. Underlying the physical brain an 'etheric brain' and so on...And where in the physical body there are distinct and separate parts, in the etheric (bioplasmic) everything is in living flow and

interpenetrating movement (p.11).

There are other confirmations of the etheric body such as the phantorn limb and the sleeping limb phenomena, but they are beyond the scope of this article (Poppelbaum, 1971, Sieweke, 1959 and Van Arnim, 1967).

The etheric forces have been discussed in some length because of their relevance to speech and Eurythmy.

The third body in Steiner's concept of human development is the personality (soul) or astral body, as he calls it. This invisible body which envelopes and interpenetrates the physical and etheric bodies, is the vehicle of sensations and feeling--pain and pleasure, of impulse, craving, need, passion, etc. (Steiner, 1965). Its influences on the etheric body, which only can be mentioned here, are psychosomatic.

The fourth body is the ego. It is the vehicle of self-identity "I". According to Steiner (1965), the ego is the basis of self-consciousness cognition and intelligible speech. The ego enables man to hold in suppression lower instincts and impulses, while following certain more socially acceptable or morally-based wishes and intentions. Steiner (1971) describes the relationship of these four bodies:

> The physical body as the coursest structure lies within the others which maturally penetrate it and each other. The etheric body fills the physical as a life form. The astral body (soul)

> extends beyond this on all sides. The physical and astral bodies are the carriers of the ego or "I" and in then it acts. Just as the physical body has its center in the brain, so has the astral body its center in the ego (pp. 25-26).

The psycho-physical interrelation between the four bodies is extremely complex and beyond the scope of this rather limited introduction. But Steiner's (1972), concept of development also involves the process of the unfoldment of stages, somewhat similar to Piaget (1969), and the ideas of the child development psychologists, such as Ilg and Ames (1965), of the Gesell Institute, except that he includes in his psychology the unfoldment and influence of the four bodies (particularly the etheric, astral and ego) at the various developmental stages. For the purposes of explaining the basis and function of Eurythmy, a discussion of Steiner's stages and their educational implications would not be necessary here. (Reader is referred to the bibliography). How does Steiner's theory of human development relate to Eurythmy?

Basis of Eurythmy

As indicated, the basis of Eurythmy is the etheric body or forces. And the etheric body is the basis of growth, regeneration of body cells, organs, maintenance of health, and for the more subtle aspects of personality and

cognitive development, and all essential activities of man draw their energy from the common reservour of this etheric body. Therefore, a dependent physiological-psychological relationship is created in which the physical constitution can affect the psychological constitution and vise-versa. Included in the etheric body is the speech process. Steiner (1955), explains:

> The etheric body contains within it the forces of growth, of nourishment and of memory all this is imparted to the airy formations when we speak. The inner being of man, in so far as this is expressed in the etheric body, is impressed into air when we speak (p. 27).

In other words, the speech sounds we make are a product of the etheric forces, and the air formations created by the spoken words are an image of the etheric forces that created them. As Steiner (1955) stated: "The spoken words are always a birth of the etheric (forces)" (p. 13).

Steiner studied the movements of the organs of speech as they produced the sounds. These movements proved to be akin to the formative movements of the inner organs of man (Glas 1971). To clarify this point, it was stated that the physical organs and cells of the body are in reality temporal deposits or these dynamic, metamorphosing etheric current flows, moving continuously, some quickly, some slowly throughout the body. For example, "it is well known that the substance of the liver is exchanged in the course of ten days, whereas the substance of the brain takes much longer" (Glas 1971 p. 2). It is six months before new

molecules appear in the bones. While the hair and nails regenerate rapidly, it takes seven years before all the skins cells have been replaced. Every organ and cell, therefore, is the effect, the etheric current flow the condition. From a medical standpoint, and as with the basic theory undergirding acupuncture, a misdirected or unbalanced etheric current flow of forces can cause organ malfunctions and illnesses.

Glas (1971) a physician and curative Eurythmist, states, "From this it follows that in order to prevent pathological conditions, or to improve if something has already gone wrong, we have to remove these movements" (p. 2). This is where Eurythmy comes in as a form of therapy. That is, the formative movements of speech, which are the creation of the etheric forces, and the product of the layrnx and the organs of speech, are transformed into movements of the whole body, particularly the arms and the hands. This is Eurythmy; speech made visible. It is through the connection of these movements of speech with the etheric forces that the Eurythmic movements can influence these formative movements or etheric current flow in a wholesome way. In short, Eurythmy facilitates, enhances and rebalances the etheric forces in the body. Miriam Wallace (1971), who has been a curative/remedial Eurythmist for over forty years, states, "Curative Eurythmy is the stirring into normal activity those upbuilding forces which have become too sluggish to maintain health" (p.39).

Eurythmy is a method of controlled gross motor movement to stimulate the etheric forces. It is intended to strengthen the well being of the person practicing it. The major difference between Eurythmy and other methods (e.g. acupuncture) of stimulating the etheric forces, is the source or origin of the stimuli. Eurythmy, which comes out of the effort, initiative and will power of the person, is internal stimulation, while acupuncture, massage, etc are external stimuli. Tiller (1973), of Stanford University describes the various methods of stimulating the etheric force flow in the body:

> There are several ways in which one can produce an acupuncture stimulation. It appears all one needs to do is stimulate, sufficiently, the acupuncture points. This can be done by chemical stimulation, manual massage...electrical current ...laser beam...(p. 19).

However, with Eurythmy the etheric forces are stirred into action and controlled by the individual. In this sense, Eurythmy appears to be a more natural form of etheric force stimulation.

As mentioned, there are three types of Eurythmy--speech, music, and curative or therapeutic. Speech and music (tone) Eurythmy are also called artistic Eurythmy. Therapeutic Eurythmy, which is based on artistic Eurythmy requires the assistance of a physician to diagnose the malady and with the

Eurythmist recommends specific Eurythmic movements. Whereas, artistic Eurythmy is a performing art, performed by a group or by an individual to music, poetry and drama in a class and or on the stage. However, artistic Eurythmy is also used therapeutically to improve speech, posture, co-ordination, breathing, nervous disorders and personality disorders and the general health of children as well as adults. Eurythmy is a integral part of the Waldorf curriculum. It is the Eurythmist, with the advice and counsel of the class teacher and the school physician, that determines the necessary Eurythmic movements for each child and the class. In reality, all forms of Eurythmy are therapeutic. There are even different Eurythmy exercises for each age level.

Let us first examine some specific Eurythmic gestures and the application of Eurythmy in the Waldorf Schools.

Eurythmic Movements

In Eurythmy, the formative laws underlying speech and music are carried over into the larger expressive movements of the arms and body. For example, in the pronunciation of consonant and vowel sounds, there is "a distinctly different type of activity in the entire vocal organism of each sound" (Wallace 1971, p. 38). That is, when we pronounce a "K" as in "king" or "cut", an "L" as in "Life" or "Lily," a "B" as in "bud" or "baby," there is not only the difference between these sounds, but each has its own innate character, and formative power. The "K" has a firm, cutting and piercing character, the "L" has a lifting, fluid and flowing character,

whereas the "B" has a formative enveloping and building character. The "R", for example, has a revolving, rolling, running, rushing character. One can feel that the consonants relate to the outer world, an external expression of man. It is the characteristic expressions that the Eurythmist emphasizes in her movements. The Eurythmic movements for "K", "L", "B", and "R" are illustrated in figures I-IV.

Each of the Eurythmic consonant movements has a different therapeutic affect. The K exercise increases and stimulates the rhythms of the digestive system (Glas, 1971, p. 6). The L exercise stimulates sluggish circulation, which affects the digestive system and improves the breathing. "The firmness of the B reacts strongly on over-active or uncontrolled secretions" (For example, bed-wetting of children) (Wallace, 1971, P.40). The R exercise is for stimulation of the sluggish lower digestive tract(Glas,1971,p.7). Each of these movements when used in curative Eurythmy need to be performed not only accurately but with intensity. Wallace (1971), explains:

> Curative Eurythmy...gestures...are intensified, repeated and modified in such a way that, instead of being creative in outer artistic expression, they react strongly back into the bodily organism itself stimulating the up-building, recreative forces in a more specific way than has hitherto been possible through more general physical exercise (p.39).

It is very difficult to represent Eurythmy with static drawings, because they are dynamic movements. The Eurythmic gestures for each consonant and vowel is done with the arms at various positions in relation to body, for example, above the head, chest level, towards the feet and even behind the back. Each position has a significant meaning and effect.

The vowels are an expression of man's inner being, his moods and emotions. For example, the vowel "A", as in "aim", "blaze" and in "hale" is an expression of self-awareness, "the feeling of confronting and resisting something" (Steiner, 1955, p. 18). The vowel "E" is an expression of self-assertion, "a feeling of stretching outward, and upward; the "U" ("oo")is an expression of coldness, holding back, contraction and introversion.

The Eurythmic movements for "A", "E" and "U" are illustrated in figures V-VII.

Each of these Eurythmic gestures are used to treat different physical and psychological weaknesses. The "A" exercise, which employs crossing and touching gestures of arms and legs, gives strength, self-direction, confidence to a shy or depressed person. (Steiner (1955) claims that it helps to strengthen the sense of self. The "E" exercise, which is a stretching gesture, is for persons who lack self-assertion, are insecure, have poor posture and even serious curvatures of the spine...caused by the absence of this

typical human quality". (Glas, 1971, p. 14). The "U" Eurythmy exercise, a parallel movement of the arms, is to improve coordination, blood circulation and awareness of the limbs. Glas (1971) states: "The 'U' exercise is for those who cannot stand properly (lack balance) or who get tired when they walk...(for) those who do not really penetrate the legs and feet with their conscious personality" (p. 12).

Through the revitalization of the etheric forces, a regeneration of the person's physical and psychological constitution takes place. Wallace (1942) explains that one Eurythmic gesture "wakes up the stolid type of person both physically and mentally, while another builds more physical substance and stamina in the body of the oversensitive type" (p. 9).

Tone Eurythmy is also used therapeutically, Music has always been thought to have a healing effect, in a general fashion. Beat, rhythm, tone and intervals, the basis of tone Eurythmy, are related therapeutically to the respiratory, nervous and the metabolic system, rebalancing the vital forces of growth and development.

As indicated, there is a fine line between curative Eurythmy, which is used in medical practices, nursing homes, clinics and schools for mentally and socially maladjusted children and adults, and the artistic Eurythmy used in the Waldorf Schools for normal children. Both have a therapeutic

affect, although the Eurythmic gestures are similar. It is the emphasis and intensity of the movement that distinguishes the application of curative Eurythmy from artistic Eurythmy.

Eurythmy in the Waldorf Schools

Eurythmy as taught in the Waldorf Schools* has both a therapeutic and an academic purpose. Therapeutic Eurythmy is used for treating certain developmental, personality and physical disturbances in the maturing child, while artistic Eurythmy enhances and supports a wide range of academic and artistic skills and experiences. Both are integrally related and interchangably applied in the Waldorf curriculum through the media of rhythm and movement in music, speech and poetry.

Therapeutic Application of Eurythmy

Therapeutic Eurythmy is also concerned with supporting and enhancing the child's total development and well being through the various stages of maturation To accomplish this the Eurythmy curriculum is adjusted to the developmental stages "to help bring harmony between the child and his own body so that he develops his best facilities" (Harwood, 1958, p. 147). Eurythmy exercises are perscribed to integrate, what Steiner (1965), calls, the threefold nature of man--thinking, feeling and willing.

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* There are over 110 Waldorf schools established in 18 countries. They are comprehensive, including kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Another goal of Waldorf education is to keep the child young for as long as possible. Both the integration of the child's threefold nature and maintenance of youthfulness can be facilitated through the revitalization of the etheric forces by means of Eurythmy. Kari Van Oordt (1955-56) explains:

> If we keep alive this stream of natural etheric forces through our body and let it enliven us again and again, we would be able to stand more firmly in life, would be able to bring out intellectual knowledge, what we learn in our heads, into the limbs, into our will and into our actions. This is what we want to achieve when we do Eurythmy with the children (p.4).

As indicated, Eurythmy is a disciplined art of movement and by means of the controlled exercises, the etheric forces are formed and subjugated, as it were, to the purpose and benefit of the practioner as that the "...nature forces --living, growing life forces--that stream freely and unhindered through our body--not wildly and chaotically, but are consciously guided by the personality which abides in the body, by our real selves (ego)" (Oordt, 1955-56, p.5).

In other words, health and normal development depend on the proper flow and balance of the etheric forces throughout the body, as explained earlier. Still other Eurythmy exercises are given "to develop alertness and mobility; still

others for the purpose of wakening social feeling" (Glas 1974, p. 71).

Another of the related as well as interesting aspects of Waldorf education is the anti-intellectual aspect of the curriculum and the heavy emphasis on movement, rhythm, music and artistic activity. Steiner (1965) felt that forced intellectual learning prematurely aged the child physically and mentally, in addition to depriving the child of his natural emotional life. He (1965) said "...that if we demand intellectual concepts and responses too soon the child is brought to a false maturity" (p. 123). Steiner decried any form of intellectual learning that did not involve the child motorically and artistically. He postulated that intellectual learning "per se" depleted or decimated the etheric forces, whereas disciplined motor movements and artistic activities enhanced the etheric forces. To briefly explain this, one must understand that the etheric forces, the basis of growth and regeneration, concentrate on the physical development during the childhood years. As the child proceeds through the stages of maturation (e.g. Piaget) the etheric forces are gradually released from the physical for the cognitive processes. Thinking requires energy as does physical development and activity. For example, one of the basic characteristics that differentiates the preoperational from the concrete operational from the formal operational stages of cognition is the degree of voluntary

control over the thinking processes. The stage of cognition and the degree of voluntary control inherent in each stage is determined, in addition to the level of maturation and the aggregation of life experience, by the quantity of etheric energy or forces available for cognition. It, therefore, follows that the greater the amount of etheric energy available, the stronger and more flexible the cognitive processes.

Hence, if a young child is exposed too early to intellectual learning (e.g. reading, etc.) what occurs is a premature depletion and ineffective use of these forces for cognitive purposes that should be used for physical development. The result is the premature loss of plasticity in development and intelligence. The child's intelligence and learning capacity become differentiated and fixed early, which, in turn, limits the quality and quantity of experiences from which he can profit. His intelligence and learning potentials reach a plateau prematurely (Ogletree 1974a and Moore and Moore 1975).* Therefore, intellectual learning is delayed in a Waldorf School. As Barnes (1966) puts it: "Steiner would have a child simmer in his juices (etheric energy) awhile, develop strength for a lifetime, rather than exploit and deplete them foolishly" (p.7).

Eurythmy along with the artistic approach to education in the Waldorf schools helps keep the child youthful and

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* See Better Late Tham Early by Moore and Moore for additional information on the effects of forced and premature intellectual learning on children's development.

malleable and therefore more open to the more subtle influences of the educational process. Therapeutic Eurythmy is an essential part of the Waldorf curriculum from the primary years through the adolescent years. It is used at all levels to help the physical body to become a more amenable instrument for the developing personality and intellect. Wallace (1971), explains its benefits for the adolescent.

> Toward adolescence special exercises help to to harmonize the whole organism making the transition period less chaotic. The wide variety of problems range from correction of posture and pronated ankles to disturbance of the metabolic, (respiratory) and nervous systems, from difficulties of a psychological and temperamental character to serious illness (p.40).

The line between the therapeutic and academic application of Eurythmy is a fine one, both are beneficial to the development of the child.

Academic Application of Eurythmy

The approach to Eurythmy and the way it is taught is determined by the age and development of the child and the grade level. It is used to enhance the areas of speech, reading, writing, arithmetic, poetry, music, geometry, drama, language, literature and history.

Since a comprehensive description of the application

of Eurythmy in the Waldorf school is beyond the limited introductory scope of this article, I will briefly indicate how it is employed at each grade level.

In the first grade the children are lead from natural play to formed movement. It is through the marking of rhythm in poetry and music, through the imitation of Eurythmic movements that the children become more acquainted with their own bodies in a natural manner. "The children listen to the sounds and carry out the movements that belong to them" (Heydebrand, 1966, p. 19). These exercises help to enliven the faculties of listening and speaking. Eurythmy also facilitates the readiness stages of learning the alphabet and learning to read. For example, the children experience the movement of the sounds and the letters through Eurythmic movement to verses that have been created out of the inherent sounds of the vowel and consonant. Kimball (1972) describes a Eurythmy lesson for "S" sound, for which the following verse was created:

> "Silversnake, Silversnake
> Slide through the slippery grass"
>
> The hand describes the "S" several times with a sliding movement through the air and over the floor. For grass the hands go from up to down with a grass-in-the-wind-like shiver. Music supports these gestures, bringing it about through ear and eye, through touch and motion, the child as a whole is reached (p. 53).

Most of the sounds and letters are learned in this manner,

In the second grade, the Eurythmy curriculum is continued in which movement is connected with words, except the forming of the movements are more exact (Oordt, 1955-56). It is also in the primary grades, that children learn geometric patterns--the circle, and non-metric forms that correspond to the letters and numbers. They learn to walk and run straight and curved lines to music in varying rhythms, which later leads into more complicated forms such as the lemniscate, square, pentagram and so on.

In the third grade, Eurythmy movements become more precise. The content and inner beauty of language and poetry is stressed. Speech and geometry exercises are continued as alliterative and similar exercises are given to develop a sense of rhythm and a feeling for space. "Eurythmy (also) is employed to correct careless handwriting and to bring the nine year old child into a more conscious relationship with his environment" (Heydebrand, 1966, p.25). Through tone Eurythmy the children not only learn the musical scales in an overt-expressive manner, but it helps them "to pass unscathed through the difficult early years of learning to play a musical instrument" (Compton-Burnett, 1950, p. 11).

Whereas in the primary grades, the children generally performed the Eurythmy exercises in a circle as a group,

the fourth and fifth grades work more individually. Here they move Eurythmically into more sophisticated geometric patterns, such as triangles, hexagrams, pentagrams, spirals, and so on. This not only provides the foundation for current and future geometry lessons, "but helps to give a clear and conscious relationship to space" (Oordt, 1954, p.6). Small Eurythmy groups are organized to learn to form and shape geometric patterns together to facilitate space and social awareness. Grammer, which is formally introduced at this age level, is enlivened through Eurythmy. The children learn to grasp more consciously the grammatical elements of speech through different Eurythmy patterns. Tone Eurythmy is also the vehicle for studying the major scales and melodies of the classics of Bach, Schumman, Mozart and Haydn.

At the sixth, seventy and eighth grades, Eurythmy exercises in concentration, speech, listening, music, poetry and geometry are continued. No interpretative Eurythmy is encouraged as yet. "As in all other arts, skills precede the possibility of worthwhile creation" (Glas, 1974, p. 72).

Eurythmy is carried into the high school, where it is still an integral part of the academic curriculum, particularly in the areas of language, literature, history and music. At the secondary level, the student's Eurythmic

skills begin to ripen; "they enter more consciously into the inner being of the movements of music and speech" (Heydebrand, 1966, p. 30). They begin to interpret the mood rhythm and stanza forms of the poetic and musical pieces with their feelings. "Eurythmy becomes an illustration and confirmation of what they have learned about the art of poetry and music" (Harwood, 1958, p. 156). Eurythmy begins to be experienced as a complex discipline in which the body becomes the silent instrument for the visual expression of music, speech and poetry as is the piano the resounding, interpretative expression of music.

It is not until the last two years of high school that the fruits of the student's labor begin to unfold into real artistic work through such Eurythmy performances as "A Midsummer Night's Dream", Greek plays and other classical drama. In addition to its artistic value at the secondary

level, "Eurythmy and other forms of art balance the strenuous intellectual activity of the last school years..." (Compton-Burnett, 1950, p. 13).

Summary and Conclusion:

As indicated at the onset of this article, Eurythmy is a complex disciplined art of movement, based on the dynamic relationship of gesture to sound. Being an art makes it just that more difficult to explicate on paper. Therefore, experience is the only real basis for knowing it.

However to understand the function and application of Eurythmy, one needs to know Steiner's theory of etheric forces that undergirds it. Eurythmy is a facilitator and moulder of these etheric forces, which are the basis of physical, emotional and cognitive growth, nourishment and speech, etc.. Its application is therapeutic, educational and artistic.

Therapeutic Eurythmy helps the entire body to become more plastic and receptive to change and to other therapeutic measures, Wallace (1971) explains:

> The human organism of today has lost much of the inner mobility it once had. It has become hardened and stiffened as a result of the pressure and nervous tension of modern life. Regaining some of this mobility facilitates healing processes (p. 40).

In collaboration with physicians and teachers, "significant therapeutic and educational applications of Eurythmy have been developed" (Glas, 1974, p. 68).

The application of Eurythmy in the schools not only contributes to and enlivens the academic experiences in other classes, but helps the children to harmonize thought, feeling and willing through movement. That is, "some exercises are designed to produce a quieting effect on children of excitable natures, others tend to stimulate children inclined to dullness or inactivity" (De Vall, 1940, p. 5). The commonality between therapeutic and educational Eurythmy is its artistic nature.

Artistic Eurythmy is the basis of therapeutic (curative), educational and tone Eurythmy. It makes visible the meter cadence and rhythm of poetry, the vowels, consonants and nuances of speech and the scales, melody and rhythm of music. (as shown, these are carried over into the therapeutic and educational spheres). The person performing Eurythmy "is comparable to a musical conductor, for the Eurythmist has to conduct all the motions of his body, which work together in their artistic development (and expression) as a soundless orchestra" (Heirman, 1971, p. 15). Eurythmy is a performing art as is ballet and modern dance. Today there are a number of European professional Eurythmy companies performing internationally and eleven Eurythmy training centers. To become an Eurythmist requires four years of full-time study, plus six months to learn curative Eurythmy.

The author has attempted to describe Eurythmy and its application. A description of any art has its inadequacies,

particularly one that is based on an unorthodoxed theory of human development and which seems to have some practical, yet esoteric, implications for the fields of medicine psychology, and education.

Perhaps Steiner's Eurythmy and its associative theory of etheric forces could best be summed up in the following statement by Franz Hartman, M.D. (1973), who wrote the preface to Paracelsus:

> If reasonable sceptics say that such things do not exist, he can only mean to say that they do not exist relatively to his knowledge, because to deny the possibility of the existence to anything of which we know nothing would imply that we imagined ourselves to be in possession of all the knowledge that exists in the world and believed that nothing could exist of which we did not know. A person who peremptionly denies the existence of anything which is beyond the horizon of his understanding, because he cannot make it harmonize with his accepted opinions, is as credulous as he who believes everything without any discrimination neither is a free thinker (p. V).

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